

Natural Rearing Newsletter ©

Volume 1 Issue 3

MARCH 1995

FOR BREEDERS THAT CHOOSE TO THINK FOR THEMSELVES

From The Desk Of: MARINA ZACHARIAS

Wow! From all the heavy response to our last article on commercial pet food, it's obvious that the importance of diet is a major concern for most of us. I have received so many requests for the diet that I feed my dogs that I will cover it in this issue.

When I talk to people about feeding fresh foods to their dogs, it seems the biggest fear they have is 'what if I do something wrong--I feel so responsible. I know I had the same feelings when I started, but look at how ironic this really is!

Who teaches our vets about nutrition--the pet food companies. Whose science and research are we getting--the pet food companies. Did you know that their "Long Term Studies" are only conducted for 26 weeks--no longer!!

The audacious claim of 100% complete nutrition implies that these manufacturers have 100% complete knowledge of food nutrition and every science that goes into these. They would have us believe that they know more about dog and cat nutrition than human nutrition. They try to instill fear of adding or using anything else with the song and dance that somehow this will upset the perfect balance that only they know how to achieve.

If a top pediatrician sat a 100% complete baby growth bag of food in front of you; told you it was backed by all the latest science; and most importantly you are told not to add anything else to your baby's diet as it would unbalance this food--would you believe it? No! We select food for ourselves and our children without such assurances every day and don't think twice about it. Why then are we 'afraid' to treat our animals with the same respect rather than leave it up to the 'big boys' to tell us what to do? You don't suppose we've been influenced by advertising, do you?

For example in the latest adds you see, you are warned not to switch foods because you will upset your dog's stomach with anything other than 'Brand x'. Ludicrous!! How would you like to go through your whole life eating only one kind of 'mush' with absolutely no variety whatsoever?

Before getting into specifics of what I do, please realize that I don't advocate that everybody should do exactly as I do! There are many ways to accomplish the same thing and each of us must develop a system suitable to our own life styles.

Common sense should tell you that the closer you can come to "natural" foods, the more "nutrition" will be available for your animals.

Mother Nature designed the dog and the cat to not only survive but thrive on RAW food. Can you even imagine a pack of wolves sitting around a camp fire waiting while a Moose carcass turns slowly over a spit being cooked for the evening meal ??

The concept that we have "bred" out the ability of domesticated animals to handle a raw diet, is just another myth propagated by you know who. Even some vets have fallen for this line of propaganda. I recently talked to a breeder that was in the process of switching to a raw diet. When her vet learned what she was doing his comment was "My god, you're going to kill him feeding that stuff". It's still hard for me to believe that any 'professional' can think that way.

The digestive tract of a healthy animal can easily cope with any salmonella or other bacteria normally associated with raw meat. How else could an animal survive in the wild! Even when the carcass may be days old, even to the point of smelling rank, it still forms part of the normal diet in nature.

However, if this is your only concern with using raw meat, a simple solution to set your mind at ease is to pre-soak the meat with grapefruit seed extract (available at most health food stores) or a solution of food grade hydrogen peroxide. This will effectively kill off any trace of harmful bacteria.

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THE FRESH FOOD MEAL

The basic diet that I follow is taken from "The Complete Handbook for the Dog and Cat", by Juliette de Baracly Levy. I do try to add variety when I can (i.e. vegetables in season; leftover pastas, etc.) I raise Basset Hounds so the suggested quantities may need to be adjusted for the size of your dogs. The vitamin amounts given here are correct for an average 65 pound dog. Young puppies are of course fed differently.

Fundamentally I feed about one third meat, one third vegetables and one third grains. I do feed the grains and the meat separately for better digestion. I feed a midday meal (approx. 11 am-noon) and an evening meal (approx. 7 p.m.).

Cereals need to be presoaked to be easily digested. As I feed a number of dogs, I pre-measure dry cereal and bran into individual bowls in the morning and let soak in water for at least 3 to 4 hours. Or you can put the dry cereal into a container; fill it with water, and put into the fridge. It will keep for a few days this way. As the volume of presoaked cereal is different than dry cereal, this would need to be compensated for when serving.

All food should be served at room temperature. DO NOT Microwave!!

Vegetables do need some preparation. Simply put them through a food processor so they are finely chopped. For some animals with weaker digestive systems, vegetables can be pureed until they regain good digestive tone. To save time I process enough vegetables for a week. I add veggies to the meat meal but they can also be given with the cereal.

Remember, there is no one right way to feed your animals. If you are used to feeding one meal a day, combine the cereal and meat. Experiment and do what's right for you. It may seem overwhelming to start, but once you have a routine, it becomes very quick.

Cereal meal: Use 1/2 to 1 cup dry measurement of Barley Flakes and Large Oat Flakes, (not the instant or quick kind) of equal measure. I add 5 tablespoons of Bran (as you would buy for human consumption); a tip of a teaspoon of Special Blend Herbal Supplement; 1,000 mg. of Vitamin C; NR Herbal Compound or NR Daily Health tablets; Cottage cheese (to flavor--approx. 2 tbsp.); 1 tablespoon Sunflower oil or Flax Seed oil (make sure this is cold pressed--obtain it from a health food store). Mix. (For young dogs who need weight you can try Buttermilk or goat's milk instead of cottage cheese). Yogurt can also be given daily.

Meat Meal: I use 12 oz to 1 1/4 pound raw meat. I utilize poultry with a mixture of organ parts (not liver) and flesh meat. I use equal parts of turkey hearts, gizzards and ground turkey. If you are making a switch from commercial foods I would suggest that initially you cut meat in smaller pieces of about a quarter and increase the size later so they get good chewing action. Ground meat is not as desirable as flesh meat but it is economical.

To the meat I add: 200 iu. Vitamin E; 1,000 mg. Vitamin C; 4 tablets of Cyrofood (a natural form of bonemeal); 5 tablespoons of Bran; 1 Tablespoon of wheat germ; 1/4 teaspoon of NR Seaweed Mineral Food; Large handful of grated raw carrots; 2-3 tablespoons of other grated vegetables (depending on what is in season); a heaping tablespoon of chopped greens (this is very important. I use parsley and cress or dandelion--blend them in a food processor); 1 tablespoon cold pressed sunflower or flax oil (I add an extra tablespoon of cod-liver oil in the winter). Add water or juice from the meat and mix. Egg yolks can be give up to three times weekly with meat.

I do give whole carrots daily after the meal (very good for their teeth). They love them and it's a great dessert. I have one puppy (9 month) that is so crazy for carrots that she will ignore the meat meal until she first has her carrots.

Feed meat no more than 4-5 times a week. For those who need to lose weight, substitute tuna packed in water 1 or 2 nights.

Saturday I feed regular cereal in the morning but I cook brown whole grain rice for dinner. Or repeat the barley / oats but in larger quantities. Dinner supplements remain the same.

Sunday--Juliette and many others insist that all animals should be given one day of fasting. The benefits are many and if you can overcome those big brown eyes begging you for food, this is a verified method of cleansing the system and truly is better for them in the long run. On the fast honey, grape juice, vegetable broth's, or milky meals such as yogurt can be given. Use NR Herbal Compounds on the evening of the fast. Soaked senna pods can be given before bed to help the cleansing process. Soak 5-7 pods in 3-5 tablespoons of water in the morning. Let soak all day. Take out pods and add honey to the liquid to give flavor.

If you can't do a full day of fasting then at least skip the lunch meal and make dinner a simple meal of rice, cottage cheese, Vitamin C and oil. Of course any day of the week can be picked for meatless or fasting days. I prefer the weekend.

Throughout the week I alternate between the NR Daily Health tablets and the NR Herbal Compound Tablets. I generally will give more Herbal Compounds, especially before going to any show. For those dogs that need it both compounds can be given daily.

This is the basic diet I have used for about 10 years now. At first reading it may seem like a lot of work but once you are used to it, its surprising how fast it all goes.
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Buy everything you can in bulk! I buy cereal in 50 lb. bags (including bran); meat by the case; (fortunately I live close to a poultry processing plant); carrots in 25-50 lb. bags (juice carrots are very economical and serve the purpose). If you have a basement home with a cooler or cellar, store the cereal and carrots there.

One of the things I have learned over time is to try and buy wholesale wherever you can. I buy enough fresh meat for one week at a time and I cut an entire weeks worth in approx. half an hour. (I usually don't cut the hearts). If there is more meat in the case than I can use in a week I simply freeze it and use it the following week. Process your greens and vegetables in large batches once a week and store in the refrigerator. (I do confess that I have a separate old fridge just for my dogs). When you use these time saving methods it becomes almost as convenient as feeding from a bag and adding other things to it.

To switch dogs to the natural diet, I like to do a total switch all at once. (Older dogs should switch more slowly. Meat could be lightly cooked then decrease cooking time until it is raw and digestion is good). You may need patience in getting them to eat the cereal, as it is less flavorful than commercial dog food. Stick to it. If they won't eat the cereal, do not feed meat until they will accept the cereal. Once they figure it out though, you should have no problems.

Don't forget that cats can also benefit greatly from a raw diet. The proportions fed need to be changed a little and I would strongly recommend that you consult Levys' book for guidelines.

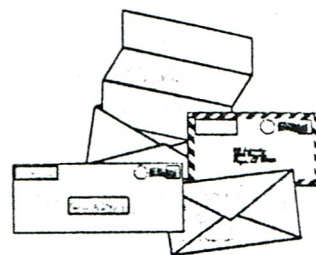
Please don't feel guilty if you can't feed fresh food everyday! On busy days try to give a vegetable or fruit on the side. Just as it is your choice to eat frozen dinners or eat at fast food chains every day, so is it your choice to feed commercial processed food everyday. But be aware of what you are getting and the consequences!!! Our animals are living beings. ALL living creatures, (including humans) need fresh food in order to live a healthy life. This is a fact!

A breeder who lost two young dogs in a span of 5 months, while incurring vet bills of over \$6,000, (the time and heartbreak given in caring for these dogs are of course immeasurable.) told me that the little extra time involved in feeding a fresh food diet is so insignificant compared to what she had been through. She now enjoys peace of mind knowing that her dogs are enjoying their good health.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am happy to help you and your animals make the switch!



MAILBOX



Ed. Note: I do appreciate your feedback and all the great testimonials regarding the success you have been having with various therapies. I would like to reserve this segment of our newsletter as a format for breeder to breeder experiences--both good and bad. When you write me it would be a big help if you would provide details of the problem, what was done previously, and the results of what you have done now. Try to include enough information that others can learn from your experience.

Many of the most interesting stories I get are from phone conversations. Unfortunately, I don't feel free to use these as there is always the possibility of misunderstanding or perhaps misquoting someone.

The more we 'share' the more we all gain. Please keep your letters coming.

Dateline February 11, 1995--Illinois

Dear Marina:

I read your article on Homeopathic remedies printed in the AKC Gazette this month with great interest. I first became acquainted with Homeopathy last July when shortly after the AKC Gazette printed its article on the subject, my 7 month old, very lame, show prospect was diagnosed with a fragmented coronoid process of the elbow at the University of Illinois and given a prognosis of fair. He was placed on a regime of strict limitation of exercise and aspirin, neither of which he was able to tolerate.

As a last resort I contacted Dr. Marta Engel who was the closest veterinarian mentioned in the article and she agreed to try and help. The dog was given two courses of treatment with calcium carbonate and calcium phosphate, coupled with a diet change to Natural Life. Six months after his first diagnosis, (the dog) was returned to the U. of I. for follow up radiographs to see how his disease was progressing, with the prospect of corrective surgery and therefore neutering him. To the amazement of the specialists there his x-rays were normal and he will only return to have radiographs taken for O.F.A. examination when he is old enough. I firmly believe that it was the Homeopathic treatment that did the trick!

Neat stuff! I love it when we can "amaze" the "experts" with results that are just not supposed to be possible. It's too bad that Holistic vets are often turned too as a 'last resort' rather than a first choice. Often the Holistic practitioner gets the 'basket cases', given up on by the orthodox community. Although there is substantial gratification in 'curing' the 'incurable' these dedicated professionals hate to see the (to them) needless suffering that many animals go through. Lets all do our part to urge more veterinarian education in holistic methods.

Dateline February 7, 1995--Delaware
Dear Marina:

Enclosed is my subscription to your Newsletter that was passed down the chain to me via my Abady Dog Food Distributor. After reading the January Issue, I didn't want to miss the next issue.

Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!. The article entitled "Food For Thought" hit the issue on the head. Finally, someone besides Mr. Robert Abady had the intestinal fortitude (no pun intended) to speak the truth!

I have been selling Abady Foods on the retail level for almost four years, trying to educate the pet owner in quality nutrition. So often the customer, complaining about the condition of their pet, looks at the initial cost of food and chooses Brand x purely from a sticker price standpoint. Forget about the overall cost of ownership! Forget about the countless trips to the Vet for the Hot Spots, Ear Infections, Skin and Coat "itchies", Parasites, Thyroid Conditions and those nagging Fleas! In nearly twenty years in dogs I have never seen such an astounding number of dogs suffering from the everyday problems just mentioned, but also suffering from seizures, Hip Dysplasia, Panno and Cancer! It is difficult to understand how pet owners can justify the rising costs of Veterinary Care and can't justify a quality, species appropriate diet! Thank you for bringing it to light.

I look forward with anticipation to your next issue.
Please, keep up the good work!

Your point on the overall cost of ownership is well worth emphasizing--especially for those of us with multiple dogs. From my personal experience of ten years with 'natural rearing' I know that if the vets were to depend on people like me for a living, they would starve to death. The 'funny' remarks like "I think I just paid for my vets next vacation" or "I helped build that new wing at the clinic" are not so funny if you're the one forking out the money! This is a sad but all too common testimonial to the toxic overload forced onto our animals. With a little effort and some common sense the economic factors are just one more reason to 'think for yourself' about the care you choose to provide for your loved ones.

BACH FLOWER ESSENCES

These are wonderful remedies and the more I use them the more I've been impressed with their remarkable healing powers. They are like small miracles.

Dr. Edward Bach an English biologist and homeopathic physician, began to research the use of flower essences in the 1930's. He spent many hours in the hospital wards studying and analyzing patients. It was at this time he started to realize that the personality and attitude of the individual seemed to play a more important role in recovery than the medical treatment the body was receiving for the disease.

Bach watched carefully and noted the patients who were not improving, despite the fact that they were on the same medications as the other patients. With further study he recognized that personalities and attitudes of these people were holding them back from recovery and healing.

He was also uncomfortable with the idea of poisonous substances being taken into the body, even in minute quantities. He felt there was a gentler way. Thus the coming of the 38 Bach Flower Remedies.

The flower essences act as catalysts and balancers to alleviate the underlying emotional causes. Bach also believed that by removing emotional conflict one could prevent disease before it manifests itself physically.

Bach Flowers, although made like homeopathic remedies are prescribed differently. Where homeopathy is "Like cures Like", Flowers are based on "Opposites in Action" and replace the negativity of the emotional state.

Remember Dr. Stephen Blake's hypothesis- Thought provokes function and functional response creates a pathological change that we call disease.

A great example of this is Michael Landon. Outwardly he appeared in control and seemed to live the perfect life; but inwardly no one knew that he was always worrying about his performance. To the point where he was on constant tranquilizers. He literally worried to death.

We all know how sensitive our animals can be about picking up our emotions.

We've all been through the lecture of how are nerves transmit down the lead to the dog affecting performance. Well, this is also true in day to day affairs.

A good example of this is when an illness strikes one of our animals. The usual immediate reaction is a panic or fear response. It has been scientifically documented that fear is the #1 immune suppressant! So, many times it is just as important to treat yourself at the same time you are treating your pet!

Many of you have probably tried Rescue Remedy before going into the ring, But you may also want to try adding Larch for confidence and White Chestnut for concentration for both you and the Dog.

An example of a case that I experienced recently, really shows how valuable these remedies can be in very practical applications.

Just before Christmas, an owner of a Yorkshire Terrier called me explaining that her dog had very bad shooting diarrhea anytime they had company over. Sometimes it would last for days. Even the neighborhood children coming to play would create havoc. This problem had been going on for three years and the vets had tried everything--antibiotics, prescription diets--you name it. With the holidays fast approaching, she was quite desperate for any solution that she could try. I prepared a special combination of flower remedies for the dog. Two days after she started the remedy the owner called me again. After a houseful of company she couldn't believe the change in the dog. No diarrhea, more sociable, calm. She told me the dog had never liked being on her lap for too long--now she doesn't want to leave. A couple weeks later, after all the commotion of the holidays, she called again to say her Yorkie has not even had one loose stool!! She was one very happy lady. In this case the dogs' symptoms (diarrhea) were directly related to her "emotional" state and the flower remedies were the best choice to deal with this.

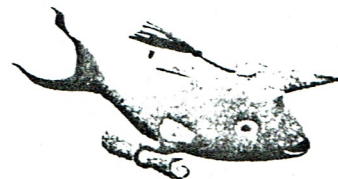
For those of you that are interested the remedy mixture was as follows:

Rescue Remedy, Cherry Plum (loss of control), Elm (overwhelmed), Heather (wanted to be center of attention), Holly (jealous), and Vervain (hyper).



BUYER BEWARE

Be careful when buying "cold pressed oils". Some of the fast buck boys buy from the same suppliers as everyday grocery store brands, and stick on their own labels claiming to be cold pressed. The only true cold pressed oils that I am aware of are Flora, Omega Nutrition and Seymour Organic Foods. They have developed very specialized equipment for their processing and take great care in all stages of production to ensure a quality product for the consumer. The extra precautions used in their packaging and storage do provide value for the price paid.



SHARK CARTILAGE

With the acknowledged increase in the incidence of cancer in both dogs and cats, I would like to bring you some important news about SHARK CARTILAGE.

Many of you are aware of the stir in the scientific community surrounding the work of Dr. I. William Lane and the research concerning the use of shark cartilage in the fight against cancer. Please bear with me while I lay out some basic background that will help you to understand a new breakthrough from Australia.

When Dr. Lane first tried to inform the world that properly prepared shark cartilage had the potential of curing cancer, most considered him to be crazy. As more and more studies were done, there emerged a large body of evidence to support his work.

The basic premise has been that shark cartilage contains proteins that inhibit development of new blood vessels (angiogenesis). As fragile blood vessels within cancerous tumors break down, these proteins prevent new ones from forming. The tumor is gradually deprived of its nutrient rich blood supply, which leads to its ultimate destruction.

There are many reports from respected universities such as Harvard and MIT, regarding the link between tumor survival and new blood formation. The research, as well as continuing clinical work, continues to show that Dr. Lane is on the right track.

The product used in the most successful studies was called CARTILADE. As usual, when something proves to be successful, imitators jump on the bandwagon and the fast buck boys try to get you to part with your dollars for inferior or sometimes worthless product that is ballyhooed as "better than", "cheaper", "more effective" etc. etc.

After 60 Minutes aired the story on shark cartilage, these imitators seemed to come out of the woodwork. Some of these are labeled as having 45% dextrin--which is sugar! There is even some reason to believe that some of the stuff from New Zealand is actually made from horses hooves.

Up until now the only product I have had any confidence in, has been the original Cartilade. The major complaints about this product are:

1. The price. It is expensive with recommended dosages.
2. The strong fishy odor and taste.

The active components in shark cartilage, the proteins that make them work, are very fragile. To remain at its highest potency, shark cartilage must be treated like a very delicate organic food. The cartilage is scraped and cleaned mechanically to remove the meat, fat, skin, etc. This process is never perfect, and small residues that later putrefy (rot), are the cause of the strong odor and taste.

Some manufacturers try to mask the scent by adding flavorings like lemon-lime or vanilla (even though they claim their products are 100 % pure and free of additives). Others seek to 'sterilize' their product and in so doing completely destroy the active proteins, rendering the product useless.

The most outrageous claim I have come across is a frozen extract product which contains 99 % water and claims to be 100 times more potent than the strongest powdered product--without any type of supporting research.

Fortunately there is a reliable test, developed by Dr. K.P. Wong, Dean of Natural Sciences at California State University in Fresno, California, that finally gives us a way to distinguish product hype from facts. Even Dr. Lane has abandoned the old, inconsistent, cam assay test that involved too many variables to provide any kind of accuracy. (Of course the advertising boys still use the cam assay test to prove whatever point they're trying to push!)

The good news is that a new production technique has been developed in Australia. Dr. Lane is aware of this work and has been consulting with them on the development of a new product called **BENEFIN**. They use a biological process to clean fresh cartilage. They've been able to eliminate almost all residue thus eliminating the objectionable strong odor and taste. It is all done at very low temperatures and without chemicals, bleach or solvents. This process appears to preserve far more of the active protein components which gives us another big bonus.

The tests from Dr. Wong's laboratory revealed that Benifin was anywhere from 35-50 % more effective at preventing angiogenesis than any other product currently available.

It is more cost effective than Cartilade and has only a faint odor similar to the light smell of fresh seafood. Benefine is now available in the U.S.A. and I do have it available in my updated product booklet.

A discussion of shark cartilage would not be complete without mention of its use with arthritic problems and of all things, Psoriasis. During clinical trials, many patients had previously been treated with chemotherapy and radiation. Consequently they often had severely reduced immune system function and developed rheumatoid arthritis and psoriasis. While being treated with high doses of shark cartilage, both the psoriasis and the arthritis seemed to improve or disappear after 3 to 5 weeks of treatment. Based on this observation, a number of doctors have now begun treating patients with one or both of these maladies, with 30 grams of shark cartilage daily and have reported material improvement.

At the Holistic vet conference in Florida, a paper by Dr. Jacques Rauis (from Belgium) detailed his study of the treatment of secondary osteoarthritis in 10 dogs, using shark cartilage (Cartilade) as the only form of treatment. This well-documented study is particularly interesting due to the tight controls used both before and after treatment and the significant results achieved.

Each dog received orally one capsule (740mg) of shark cartilage for every 5 kg. of body weight, for a period of 21 days. All were evaluated at day 8, day 15, and day 21. From day 22 to day 36 the shark cartilage was discontinued to see if there was a regression of the effects of the treatment.

By the end of day 21, there was a dramatic reduction in local pain and swelling in all 10 dogs. By measurement, both pain and swelling were reduced by 2/3.

The evaluation on day 36, (after 15 days of discontinued use of shark cartilage) reflected that the symptoms started to return, generally increasing about 25% from the Day 21 measurements.

Perhaps just as important as the scientific aspects of this study, are the 'before' and 'after' comments of the dogs' owners. Typically the 'before' observations were: "the dog walks slowly and never plays", "unable to jump or climb stairs" etc. Comments at the end of 21 days-- "much more alive; seems to be very happy. Climbs stairs alone; jumps" "walks normally, climbs stairs, runs some distance" etc.

I think we can safely conclude that shark cartilage, properly prepared, gives us another 'natural' tool to use in our health care arsenal, as we move towards the 21st Century.

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AMBRICAN Publishing, P.O. Box 879, Sumas, WA, 98295.

Published six times a year. Subscription rates US \$19 per year

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Information provided is for educational purposes only and should not be construed as veterinary advice. Professional help should always be sought.

EMERGENCY REMEDIES

As spring approaches, so increases the possibility of bee and wasp stings. So there are a few more remedies to include in our first aid kit.

A great remedy that should always be with you is Apis Mellifica (Bee venom). This is the premier remedy for swellings of any kind. It is particularly helpful for the swellings from insect stings and can be used in a higher potency for acute conditions.

Given frequently (i.e. every 5 to 10 minutes) you can literally see the swelling go down before your eyes. Once the swelling is beginning to subside, dosage can be less frequent (i.e. every hour) until full improvement.

A very convenient and effective form of Apis is put out by Heel of Germany, called Apis Homaccord. This remedy is outstanding for alleviating any oedema and excess fluid build up anywhere in the body.

I use Apis and Ledum (discussed in Jan/95 issue #2) for any insect stings, for myself or the animals. It helps to stop the pain quickly and alleviates the swelling.

You may want to consider giving Apis (one dose) at the beginning of the season to help immunize against bee stings. If animals are allergic, this will greatly diminish the chance of a sting being life threatening--even if a whole swarm of bees were to attack the animal!

In the event that you do have animals that are allergic, you should also carry BHI Allergy. This works far faster than Benedryl, as it is absorbed through the membranes in the mouth. Over the counter antihistamines need to be digested and often do not work quickly enough. Of course, using the homeopathic remedy, you are also free from the unwanted side effects. BHI Allergy can be used for any allergic type reactions.

Both Apis and BHI Allergy are great to use at the early stages of a skin rash or hives, that have come up suddenly. Usually this arises from contact through plants (such as stinging nettle) or may be of unknown origin. I would also add BHI Skin in this event.

Note: Please don't confuse the foregoing with chronic skin problems such as staph infections.

For those animals whose specific allergies are known, homeopathics work great for helping desensitization. Often allopathic allergy shots, containing the substance to which the body reacts, are prescribed to help desensitize. Aside from being relatively expensive, these injections, more often than not, simply don't work. They can also be dangerous! For example, if too much of the allergen is given you run the risk of overwhelming the body, sending it into a severe allergic reaction. This can result in shock or in extreme cases, even death.

When homeopathic allergens are administered, they are given orally and are completely safe and free of side effects. They are generally given 2 to 3 months before the effecting season. Gradually the body will need the homeopathic assistance less often until the allergies are gone.

Of course you need to address the underlying problem of why the allergies exist in the first place. This is often found to be a compromised immune system which would need to be supported (That's another discussion beyond the scope of this remedy section, that we'll get into another time).

Spring also means more time outside and in particular, outdoor shows and trials. Eyes are susceptible at this time of year, to increased debris floating in the air and seeds, etc., in the field. Owning Basset Hounds, it is amazing to me what can actually end up in the eye. From tiny flower petals that stick like glue to the eyeball, to tiny little insects that had the unfortunate timing of flying into my dogs' eye (the dog being totally oblivious to it all).

For general redness and irritation I use a homeopathic liquid combination called Eyewash. This is given direct into the eye. It is very soothing and actually can be used instead of an antibiotic. Eyewash consists of Calendula, Euphrasia, and Vitamin C, in a Saline solution.

If there is a further conjunctivitis problem then BHI Eye and Inflammation should be used. If the eye is red from Allergies, then BHI Allergy should be used--especially for 'itchy' eyes.



HEARTWORM MEDICATION WARNING

You should be concerned with the ever increasing evidence that 'Ivermectin' (the ingredient used in Heartguard) is causing several very drastic changes in dogs. Dr. Jean Dodds, reported at the conference, that it has been linked to fertility problems, Thyroid problems and auto-immune disorders. She urged us all to get off any form of medication containing this stuff. For Heartworm she recommends using only the 'daily' form of medication as it is a totally different compound.

In the 'dirty tricks' department, I received a fascinating insight into just how insidious the big drug companies can be. On Feb. 12, 1995, I was a guest speaker at an "Educational Symposium for Alternative Veterinary Methods" held in Sacramento California. I had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Walter A. McCall, also participating in the symposium. The subject of Heartguard did come up and he related his personal experience regarding how Merck Pharmaceutical (the manufacturer of Heartguard) introduced this product to the veterinarian community.

During Dr. McCall's vet. training, the incidence of heartworm was so little known, that the school did not have any "live" examples to use and had to rely on slide presentations. Consequently, when he went into practice, he had never actually seen a heartworm. He knew what they should look like but prior to Merck's marketing efforts, he had simply no occasion in his practice to examine a live specimen.

When Heartguard was announced with a heavy advertising campaign, Merck sent a 'test kit' for the detection of heartworm, to every licensed veterinarian in the United States. Suddenly, heartworm was being 'discovered' left, right and center.

Efficient 'test kit' you say? Not really. Turns out that sticking to the blank slides provided by Merck, there were tiny pieces of plastic that under normal microscope magnifications, looked identical to--you guessed it--HEARTWORM!! Only when the magnification was jacked way up could the differences be seen.

As far as Dr. McCall is concerned, he still questions the "high risk" area reports. He is aware of what seems to be a 'pocket' located in the Sierra's, but so far has seen only one actual case in his practice, with a dog that had been brought in from the East coast of Florida.

I know in our own area (Pacific Northwest) we had no reports of heartworm for years. About two years ago one case was confirmed and a major publicity campaign was mounted (Newspaper, T.V. Guide, Radio etc.) Suddenly most local vets. were jumping on the 'cash machine' with Heartguard as the latest "must have" vaccine pumped into countless animals as a "precaution".

I've received many reports of low sperm count in males and fertility problems in females that magically disappeared within a few months after taking them off Heartguard.

The October, 1994 issue of the Mastiff Reporter carried an interesting article on the subject by Carol S. Bardwick (President of Canine Cryobank Inc.). From 12 years of working/owning a reproductive specialty practice, she relates a variety of cases involving the deleterious effects of Heartguard and the return to normal within 60 days of stopping.

To quote her "I could go on and on. Scientists and Merck Pharmaceutical would say these incidents are only "anecdotal". So be it. However, I am still waiting for Merck to send me any long term reproductive studies

on canines on Heartguard. Then I could share those studies with my clients. Unfortunately, Merck has only sent data on rats and mice. I asked if they had ever done any studies at all on Ivermectin and reproduction in the canine. "I'll get back to you" said the Merck veterinarian. That was in 1992, and I'm still waiting."

There is a homeopathic form of heartworm prevention that is safe and effective. More on this later.

The number of horror stories I have received surrounding

vaccines in general, is alarming and mute testimony for the need to examine the present protocol. This is a huge subject that truly affects us all. I will be covering a lot of material about this in future issues, but for now let me just say that I am very grateful that there are natural alternatives.

Too many of us have experienced the heartbreak and devastation of losing our animals to what could have been prevented.

I believe our animals are here not only to bring us great happiness and love, but they are also here to teach us along the way. Never be afraid to keep on learning.

'Till next time--stay in touch and keep on spreading the good word !!

Notable Quotes:

Source: FDA Commissioner Charles Edwards
"It is not the policy of the FDA to jeopardize the financial interests of the pharmaceutical companies"

Notable Facts

Source: Wall Street Journal
"A study by UCLA researchers, published in Annals of Internal Medicine in 1992, found that 92% of 109 drug company advertisements violated FDA regulations. At least 61% were inaccurate, misleading, and even dangerous."